

3 de 9. Foublanque to W^m Adam

50967

My Dear Sir

I feel much obliged by the candid & explicit manner in which you have communicated your Sentiments upon the subject of our correspondence;

I trust however that you will pardon me when I observe that you seem in a degree to have blended two Questions of very different Consideration, & which I have, & shall most anxiously endeavour to keep separate & distinct.

The Question to which I applied myself was, whether Col^l Berkeley ought in the present state of things to take any, & what steps; & being of opinion that he ought to present a Petition to His Royal Highness the Prince Regent, I submitted to your Consideration the grounds upon which I formed such opinion. The Question to which you seem

principally to have applied your attention
is how His R. H. would probably be advised
to deal with such Petition when presented.
I say, such is the Question to which you
seem principally to have applied your
attention, because you have stated one objection
to the presenting of a Petition, namely, that
by so doing, Colonel Berkeley would apply
the statement furnished by His Royal Highness
to a purpose for which it was not originally
intended.

I hope that to you who have known me
professionally for so many years it ^{is} unnecessary
for me to state, that I am incapable of
advising a breach of Faith, & you may recollect
the anxiety with which I drew your attention
to Lady Berkeley's assertion, that she was
authorised by his R. H. to make any use of
his evidence that might be thought beneficial

3 de 9. Foublaque to Wm Adam

to herself & Family: if her Ladyship was mistaken in this respect, I admit that no use ought to be made of that Evidence but that which His R. H. intended, when he furnished the statement of it. But, if her Ladyship be correct, the Question is, not what was the purpose for which the Document was originally given, but what is the purpose to which it can now be most usefully applied? That her Ladyship is correct in her representation, I infer not only from her positive & uncontradicted assertion, but also from what I understand to have been the conduct of His R. H.; for if it be true that his R. H. having heard that Col. Berkeley had solicited the hand of Lady Georgina Cecil, graciously condescended to transmit a similar statement of his Evidence signed by himself to the Marchioness

50968

of Salisbury, am I not bound to ascribe His
R. H.'s conduct on this occasion to his truly
honorable anxiety to possess that noble family
of evidence so strongly tending to prove
that Col.ⁿ Berkeley is not the spurious
offspring, but the legitimate Heir of the late
Earl of Berkeley? If such was the gracious
purpose of his R. H. could it have been
intended that a Document of such incalculable
value should remain inoperative amongst
the Muniments of the House of Cecil? Can
Col.ⁿ Berkeley regard this proud testimonial
of his birthright & of his Mother's Purity &
Fame as a mere dead letter, or can he so
regard it without subjecting himself to
the charge of irreverence towards his
Parents, & of the grossest disrespect & ingra-
-titude to his Prince & Benefactor?

Such is the view in which the subject

50969-70
presents itself to my Mind, & if it be a
correct view, am I not warranted in
stating that every consideration of filial
Piety calls upon Col.^m Berkeley most
imperiously to attempt at least to render
available, Evidence, which is admitted to be
of incalculable value from its tendency to
establish his own Birthright, to extenuate
the misconduct of one Parent, & to restore the
Character of the other. But Supposing that
Col.^m Berkeley could lose sight of these highly
important considerations, or rather sacred
duties, could he consistently with that res-
pect & gratitude which he owes to, & feels for
his Royal Highness allow of the possibility
of his not attempting to make such
Evidence available, being ascribed to his
distrust of its claim to effect?

By bringing his claim so strengthened
again officially under the view of his
Royal Highness, he will have done all
of which the circumstances of his Situation
allow, but no more than the duties of it
imperiously require, & I am not aware
of any inconvenience that can result
from it.

How his R. Highness having received
the Petition may be advised to act, is a
question to which I have hitherto ^{only} hypro-
-thetically adverted, but I am bound to
presume that those whose duty it may
be to advise, are fully competent in
point of wisdom & most anxiously dis-
-posed in point of integrity to shape his
R. Highness's course so as to allow of
his ultimately doing that Justice which

we all know constitutes the first
object of his ambition.

But whatever difficulties may attach
to the subject in its present state, I
am confident they must daily increase
& as they must at some period be encounter-
ed, I cannot contemplate any as likely to
occur so favorable as the present.

Should the discussion be deferred until
the younger Son attains twenty one the
negativ^{ing} of his ^{claim} would not establish
that of Colonel Berkeley & his certainly
cannot be got rid of considering what
degree of effect is due to the Princes
evidence which a few years hence might
be supposed to have lost something of its
value from the circumstance of its having
been so long neglected.

I will not detain you with further observations except to assure you that if I had traced in your letter an apprehension that Colonel Berkeley by presenting a Petition to the effect stated, would be thought by his R.

Highness as wanting in that respect which is due to him I should have felt it to be my duty to remove that impression before I repeated my advice, but I cannot prevail upon myself to think that I should discharge my Duty to this afflicted family, if I allowed myself to speculate upon what may be the conduct of others, so far as to intercept those honorable efforts which in my judgement, ^{Col. B.} may now most usefully make. I am my Dear Sir

Yours truly
John Fontblanque
To W. Adam Esq. sixth of January 1813
Temple
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